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THE GOOD ROADS MAN.

We are soon to have appointed by the commissioners a man to act on the good roads committee for this locality. We wonder what the object of this office is any way.

Is it to satisfy somebody's political ambition or for some one's political debt, or is it that the public highways may be improved?

This is an important appointment for the community and one in which the tax payers are vitally interested. The men who put up their good money to pay the expenses of this position and to do the improving he may favor, want value received for the expenditure. We cannot see that it makes any difference to the people what may be the political or religious belief of the appointee, but it does make a great difference to them whether he is a practical man and knows a good road from a hog wallow and has some definite ideas about road building and what it takes to make and maintain a good scientific road.

The mayor of the city is by virtue of his office a member of that committee and he may be a man who knows about as much about what it takes to make a good permanent road as does an ordinary Democrat about the tariff. We hope when it comes to appointing this man the commissioners will look only to the qualifications of the man, regardless of his politics or popularity. We want the man who is fitted for the place and can see that the work is done in a systematic and scientific manner.

The great and crying need of this country now is improved roads. The time has come when we can no longer afford to drag to and from town through mud up to the axles. With the prettiest country to look at in the world, where nature has done so much for us there cannot much longer be any excuse for our unimproved roads. Sufficient and complete drainage seems to be the chief element of good roads in this country as well as any other. Many of our roads can be rendered altogether good the year around by proper drainage and a persistent use of the drag. Many sections need a top dressing of rock and gravel. In many places a good dressing with oil is all that is needed after drainage and grading are looked after. We want a man on this committee of good common sense and sound judgment, more than a kid glove aristocrat. We hope our commissioners will select such a man. There is too much money to be handled and the interests are too great to give the matter but a passing thought or to appoint a man because some one owes him a political debt. Let us have a good man for the place regardless of all other considerations.

"Tariff Reform" Under Cleveland.

Editor Chicago "Tribune": We hear much now from both parties about "tariff reform." We had a touch of it under the Cleveland administration and a sad experience it was, too, to every one. How short our memories are!

Visiting the German exhibition of cutlery during the World's Fair I remarked to the manufacturer in charge of one section: "You have a fine exhibition here, sir." "Yes," said he, "and I have a warehouse full of it ready made up to ship in as soon as your tariff is removed!" It was removed and our workmen got their knives a little cheaper, but they lost their jobs of making them, and other commodities, and we had silent factories and mills, as well as idle paupers with the attendant soup and lodging houses and living on charities.

As soon as possible after the McKisley administration could get to

STILL IN SERIOUS CONDITION

The earthquake sufferers in southern Italy and the island of Sicily are still in a deplorable condition.

The whole world started relief measures at once and many cargoes of provisions and supplies have reached portions of the stricken country, but there are yet thousands of sufferers who are still in a destitute and starving condition. Our great fleet is now approaching, through the Suez canal, and it will furnish all the relief within its power. Looters and robbers are swarming over the ruins of the stricken cities, pillaging the houses, stripping the dead and terrorizing the living. The officials, assisted by sailors from foreign vessels, are guarding all possible points as best they can, but they can't be everywhere. They have orders to shoot the miscreants at sight, and they don't seem slow in obeying orders. It will be some time yet before any systematic relief can be established. In the meantime eruptions and rumblings in the earth continue and the people are in constant terror.

work it reformed the tariff back again, and our mills and factories started up again. Our workers were employed at good wages. So instead of being a lot of dependent paupers we became a creditor nation, and we had a balance of \$700,000,000 in our favor and our workers have lived well—been paid well, and, where economical, have money in bank.—P. S. C.

URGES TARIFF ON LEMONS.

"The 2,000,000 boxes of lemons annually imported from Italy, if grown in America would furnish continuous employment, at good wages, to 5,000 people and would comfortably support 5,000 families in the United States."

This is the assertion of A. F. Call, a leading lemon grower of Corona, Cal., and one of the committee of growers who represented the American lemon industry before the Ways and Means committee at Washington.

Mr. Call continued: "Should the duty on lemons be reduced, it means the wiping out of the business of every lemon grower in America. When the bulk of the California lemons are on the market the importers' organization floods the Eastern market with lemons at a price that the American growers cannot meet. Then as the American crop is disposed of, the importers increase their quotations, the result being that the public is compelled to pay an exorbitant price. All the American lemon growers ask is a market that will enable them to continue in business, increase the acreage and pay American labor a fair wage.

"With the home market safeguarded the orange industry has been developed to a point where better oranges are being sold for less money here than in any other place in the world. With the same safeguards it will be only a few years until the same can be said of American lemons. In 1889 the importation of foreign oranges had dwindled to \$275,000. At the same time the people of this country have cheaper oranges than ever before. For we are no longer at the mercy of importers."—Philadelphia "Public Ledger."

Several of our streets are now nicely macadamized and they are a fine street to drive over, but oh my, the dust. Wonder what we are going to do about that? It seems much worse than the natural dirt.

Who do you want for mayor? It is about time to express yourself or ever afterwards hold your peace. There are also several councilmen and members of the school board to elect. Better get some good men out for these places.

THE IRONY OF POLITICS.

What might be called the irony of politics in popular government is revealed by the discussion in connection with the reputed offer to Senator Long of Kansas of a place in President Taft's cabinet. Senator Long denies the offer, according to the reports, and declares he could not afford to accept such an honor if it were tendered. He says he is too poor to maintain the position of a cabinet minister—meaning, of course, that he could not afford to live in the style which is required of such an official in Washington society.

Here is a man who has been a faithful and efficient public servant for ten years or more; who has held one of the highest and most important offices under our government; who has given some of the best years of his life to the service of the people, and yet, in the prime of manhood and the flower of his maturity, he is cut off from promotion and forced to retire to the shades of private citizenship on account of his poverty, or, rather, because of the excessive demands of snobbish society at the national capital. It is of no consequence that he merits promotion, and that the public, and Washington society in particular, should delight to honor such a man. The fact that his talents and works as a senator won the admiration and friendship alike of President Roosevelt and Mr. Taft counts for nothing against the foolish edict of an ostentatious, empty-headed society clique which dictates the social customs at Washington.

That such a state of affairs is radically wrong all sensible people will admit. Senator Long's poverty, relatively speaking, is his crowning badge of honor. During his years of service in the house and senate he could undoubtedly have accumulated a fortune by simply turning his knowledge of public affairs to account in Wall street. Upon countless occasions when important measures were pending in the senate he could doubtless have sold his knowledge of the secrets of committee rooms at his own price—but that idea is beyond discussion for the simple reason that there is not a Kansan in public life, in high station, who could be bribed to betray his country's secrets at any price. And so the fact that Senator Long is a poor man is much to his credit.

But the ugly situation remains that by reason of his honesty and disinterested public service all these years he is to be banished from public life and debarred from continuing to serve his country in a higher place in which his ability would have fuller opportunity to manifest its value to himself and the people. And this is the country in which democracy is seen at its best and where the plain, common people rule!—Kansas City Journal.

Civil Service Examination—Clerk-Carrier.

An examination for clerk and carrier will be held at the postoffice in this city on January 23, 1909.

Age limit, 18 to 45 years, on the date of the examination.

Married women will not be admitted to the examination.

Unmarried women will be admitted to the examination, but are eligible for appointment only as clerk.

Applicants must be physically sound, and male applicants must be not less than 5 feet 4 inches in height without boots or shoes, and weigh not less than 125 pounds without overcoat or hat.

For application blanks and full information relative to the examination, qualifications, duties, salaries, vacations, promotions, etc., address immediately

CASPER P. SWANK, Secretary, Board of Civil Service Examination, Postoffice, Chanute, Kansas.

The Tax Commission's Report and Recommendations.

The first report of the Legislature of the State Tax Commission, passed January 12, has been given out in advance for the benefit of members at their homes. It will repay a careful perusal and study not only by them but by all persons in Kansas concerned in taxes, and that embraces all taxpayers—not merely those taxpayers who pay taxes directly to the county treasurers. There are indirect taxpayers, and they pay taxes 365 days in the year. The general subject of taxation is of as vital concern to them as to those taxpayers who take large tax receipts from the State.

The Capital has just received the report and recommendations of the Tax Commission and we intend to do it what justice we can in detail in the future. Valuable statistical information involving a great deal of work apart from the immediate work of the commission in supervising the new law and its first year's operation is supplied by this report, such as a tabulated statement of the precise proportion of the total taxes, state, county, city, township and school district, paid by lands, city real estate, personal property and public service corporations every year since 1862, as well as estimates of the true value of different classes of property and of the personal property still escaping assessment and taxation in spite of the new law.

The relation of personal property to the subject of taxation is of course the one overshadowing problem in taxation here and every where, and it takes up the greater part of the report of the commission in Kansas, as it does in other states. The commission gives a partial digest of the opinions of commissions and economists over the country on the personal property question. For Kansas it makes an estimate based on comparisons with former assessments and the experience this last year of the amount of personal property that escapes the assessor under the new law, and finds that approximately one-half of personal property is not on the rolls and pays no taxes. So that, while a great deal has been done to equalize taxation by the law of two years ago, it still remains true that personal property evades the assessor to a very great extent and it follows that the proportion of personal property which is assessed, to the extent that it is assessed at its true value, is more unjustly treated, with relation to personal property which escapes, than before the law was enacted. The one inescapable weakness of the personal property tax is the fact that in the end it rests with the owner to give in or withhold his personal property of an intangible character, and it is mainly this intangible property that remains out.

The State Tax Commission recommends as a preliminary to meeting the problems of the personal property tax an amendment of the Constitution that will enable the Legislature to classify property for purposes of taxation. It also recommends some separation of State and local sources of revenue, there being now one common pool, the general assessment, into which the State dips its hand for a portion and the subdivisions of the State taking their respective portions, excepting that the State does raise about half a million dollars by special assessments on insurance companies, a small assessment on corporation franchises and from fees in institutions and otherwise. New York, on the other hand, raises no part of the revenues of the State from the general assessment of property; Pennsylvania raises its revenues from special subjects of State taxation almost exclusively; Connecticut

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cut gets no State support from the general assessment, and Ohio gets but one-third of 1 per cent of its State revenues from the general property assessment. So with some other States, where separation of the sources of revenues has been undertaken. A third recommendation of the commission is the enactment this winter of an inheritance tax, based on the Wisconsin law, which has passed the tests of the courts and is taken as a model. Wisconsin adds to its State revenue upwards of \$100,000 by the inheritance tax law. Other recommendations are the limitation of levies by taxing bodies, the assessment of companies owning cars other than transportation companies, assessment of express companies by an excise tax, and some incidental amendments to the present tax law.

This report is valuable as a discussion of the general subject of taxation in the State and for the information given. It is conservative on all phases of taxation and in its recommendations for more law.—Topeka Capital.

THE NEW LEGISLATURE.

Kansas is about to have another session of her Legislature, soon the solons will meet in Topeka to grind out another batch of laws. We wonder how this state ever managed to live and prosper twenty or thirty years ago. There have been innumerable new laws passed there for her welfare and each session of the Legislature grinds out another big batch. Wonder if we will ever get through?

We hope the coming Legislature will confine its deliberations to new laws that may be needed and to correction of defects in laws we already have. This is no time for freak Legislation. We need some uniform road system for the state, our school interests need attention and some modification of our tax law is imperative. If the Legislature would give a good share of its attention to these questions and a few others that the people are demanding and devote less time to digging railroads and other corporations in a senseless way, more good will be accomplished and less evil result.